



MDCR/MCRC E-newsletter for June 28, 2013

[Detroit NAACP: We still need the protections of Voting Rights Act](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/28/13

After this week's 5-4 ruling in *Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder* by activist conservative justices on the Supreme Court, who substituted their own views over those of Congress in striking down a key provision of the landmark 1965 Voting Rights Act, an [editorial in the New York Times](#) asks, "Is the civil rights era over?" The answer is a resounding, "No." Across the country, and particularly here in Michigan, the need for vigilant civil rights and voting rights protection is needed now more than ever.

[Rulings on gay marriage set up costly battle for 2016](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/28/13

LANSING — Wednesday's Supreme Court rulings could set the stage for an expensive and hard-fought repeat ballot campaign in 2016 between backers of gay marriage in Michigan and those who say the institution should be restricted to one man and one woman.

[Rights group lands \\$39.5K settlement after calling out Scio Farms Estates' policies as discriminatory](#)

From MLive, 6/28/13

In an out-of-court settlement, Scio Farms Estates and its parent company have paid out \$39,500 after a rights group claimed the manufactured home community was enforcing its policies in a way that discriminated against people with developmental disabilities.

[Immigration bill shifts to House after Senate approval](#)

From the Detroit News, 6/28/13

Washington — Attention is shifting to the House and its conservative majority after the Senate passed a landmark immigration bill opening the door to U.S. citizenship to millions while pouring billions of dollars into securing the border with Mexico.

[Robert Sedler: Breaking down the Supreme Court's gay marriage rulings](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/27/13

Yesterday, the Supreme Court gave some protection to marriage equality, but did not decide the more fundamental question of whether the Constitution requires that same sex couples be given the right to marry.

[Detroit federal judge could challenge state's ban on gay marriage](#)

From the Detroit News, 6/27/13

"Things change," the judge said, succinctly.

How prescient Detroit Federal Judge Bernard Friedman now seems.

He made that comment at a March 7 hearing, when a state attorney arguing to uphold Michigan's ban on same-sex marriage and civil unions could be legally justified by "tradition."

[Ex-Oakland women's hoops player, Muslim says Christian beliefs were imposed unfairly by now-fired coach](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/26/13

As a senior in high school, North Farmington all-state basketball player Jenna Bachrouche was being recruited by a host of colleges and liked Oakland University best.

[Voting Rights Act ruling affects two Michigan townships](#)

From the Royal Oak Daily Tribune, 6/26/13

Detroit (AP) — A ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court exempts two small Michigan townships with sizeable numbers of Spanish-speaking residents from needing federal approval before making changes to local voting laws.

[Stephen Henderson: Supreme Court's Voting Rights Act decision is supremely misguided](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/25/13

My dad was born in Mississippi in 1933, more than 60 years after the 15th Amendment guaranteed black people the right to vote, but 32 years before the Voting Rights Act would make suffrage a reality.

[African-American history books were tossed by mistake, official says](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/25/13

The emergency manager appointed to oversee the Highland Park School District's finances denied Tuesday that a large collection of black history books, tapes, film strips and other materials were deliberately discarded into Dumpsters last week from the district's high school library.

[Michigan township clerk recorded using racial slur won't leave post](#)

From the Detroit News, 6/25/13

Buena Vista Township — A Michigan township clerk who was recorded using a racial slur to describe a black official says she's staying on the job despite renewed calls for her resignation.

[Immigrants can help stave population loss, revitalize Michigan](#)

From MLive, 6/25/13

Michigan State University and its surrounding community of Lansing-East Lansing are among the Top 10 for largest international student enrollment in the United States. Each fall, more than 6,500 international students -- 1,800 of whom are new to the university -- arrive in East Lansing. And these growing numbers are boosting other figures -- economic ones.

[Supreme Court justices narrow scope for workplace](#)

From the Lansing State Journal, 6/24/13

Washington — The Supreme Court ruled narrowly Monday that workplace discrimination can only be pinned on a supervisor who has the ability to hire and fire, rather than merely direct work assignments.

[Legislation launched to legalize same-sex marriage in Michigan](#)

From the Detroit News, 6/24/13

Lansing — A group of state lawmakers launched a legislative effort Monday to make same-sex marriage legal in Michigan as the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on gay marriage is expected this week.

[McDonald's drops halal items from U.S. menu after problems in Dearborn](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/24/13

There have been only two McDonald's restaurants in the U.S. that have offered halal food. Both were in east Dearborn, which has a sizable population of Arab-American Muslims.

[Stephen Henderson: 50 years later, the challenge of measuring up to King's legacy](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/23/13

It's not trite to note that 50 years is a truly long time.

Think of the progress you can mark in any half-century of the American experience, for instance — from 13 colonies to 26 states; from a war to end slavery to the debate over giving women the franchise; from segregated lunch counters to an African-American president.

[Advocates want state to get serious on gay bias](#)

From Crain's Detroit Business (our report released in January is referenced here), 6/23/13

Add one more to the list of issues not discussed during the Michigan legislative session: expanding the state's anti-discrimination statute to include sexual orientation.

[Former skinhead turns his back on bigotry, finds new path](#)

From the Detroit News, 6/23/13

Jackson — In 2010 Chris Simpson led a march of white supremacists through downtown Jackson.

[Two years after death, family of slain civil rights icon, attorney C. Frederick Robinson still waiting for charges to be filed](#)

From MLive, 6/21/13

Flint—It's been two years since the [slaying of an attorney and civil rights icon](#), and his daughter believes his killer is still on the loose.

[Howell student wins free-speech lawsuit after saying he doesn't accept gays](#)

From the Lansing State Journal, 6/21/13

Howell— A judge says the free speech rights of a Michigan teenager were violated when he expressed an opinion against homosexuality and was removed from class during an anti-bullying day.

[Jimmy Settles: Freedom Walk's 50th anniversary is about more than marking history](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/20/13

In this day and age of high-paid lobbyists, backdoor dealing and the use of social media to leverage influence, the notion of a march to draw attention to social justice might seem quaint, if not outright antiquated.

[Commemorative walk is 'call to action' echoing MLK's historic 1963 march](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/20/13

When you talk with people who marched with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Detroit's "Walk to Freedom" 50 years ago, they will speak about the spirit of pride, unity, purpose and hope that permeated the crowd of 125,000 as they made their way down Woodward.

[Read This: Great piece on affirmative action in ProPublica](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/18/13

I haven't seen a better explanation or analysis of Fisher v. University of Texas, the current Supreme Court affirmative action case that could be decided any day now, than in [a ProPublica piece on the subject](#). (ProPublica is an independent, non-profit news organization based in New York.)

[The MLK march and its messengers](#)

From the Detroit News, 6/18/13

A majority of black Detroiters won't participate in the commemoration of the historic march when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. first delivered his famous "I Have A Dream" speech 50 years ago. Most no longer identify with the cause and have no interest in being part of the symbolism.

[Leonard Pitts Jr.: The curse of the name Redskins](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/17/13

See if this makes sense to you:

For years, I've argued with certain African-American people about their insistence upon using the so-called N-word, which, to my ears, is a statement of self-loathing. They say I don't understand. They say the word no longer means what it has always meant. They say it's just a friendly fraternal greeting.

[Bill guarantees Michigan military spouses time off](#)

From the Lansing State Journal, 6/16/13

Last fall, a Charlotte woman asked her employer for a few days off because her husband — who was deployed to Afghanistan — was granted leave time.

[Fortress Grosse Pointe: In world of school choice, community says 'stay out'](#)

From MLive, 6/16/13

Grosse Pointe — When Dan Roeske was running for the Grosse Pointe Public Schools board in 2011, he found himself addressing a PTO group at Poupard Elementary, one of the district's 13 schools. A woman asked bluntly about one of the district's perennial issues.

[Supreme Court gay-marriage rulings: Anything but simple](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/16/13

Washington — If the range of possible Supreme Court rulings on gay marriage this month requires a scorecard, the potential confusion arising from those decisions may demand a manual.

[Affirmative action ruling contest: race vs. class](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/16/13

In post-Great Recession America, which is the bigger barrier to opportunity — race or class?

[When white people and black people talk about real racial experience](#)

From MLive, 6/16/13

Jackson — White people rarely meet up with black people to swap personal stories about poor treatment based on skin color.

[Asians, Hispanics fastest-growing groups in Michigan, new census shows](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/13/13

Michigan's Asian population grew by 3.2% and its Hispanic population rose 2.2% from 2011 to 2012, representing the fastest-growing racial and ethnic groups in the state, according to new U.S. census data released today.

[Cheers for Cheerios' interracial family; ad depicts reality of life in America \(Linda S. Mah column\)](#)

From MLive, 6/13/13

Cheerios, the cereal so bland it is deemed appropriate for small children to shovel in their mouths with abandon, has managed to cause a controversy.

[Judge refuses to dismiss Muslim harassment case](#)

From Click on Detroit, 6/12/13

A Detroit judge says a lawsuit can go forward against federal authorities accused of violating the rights of Muslims at U.S.-Canada border crossings.

[Michigan Muslim civil rights group seeks probe into bank closing Arabs' accounts](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/12/13

Southfield — A Muslim civil rights organization has asked the U.S. Treasury Department to investigate JPMorgan Chase & Co. for closing bank accounts of U.S. Arabs and Muslims.

[Lawyer: Wayne County judge 'targeted' because of race](#)

From the Detroit News, 6/10/13

Detroit — Wayne County Circuit Court Judge Bruce Morrow is the target of judicial disciplinary proceedings partly because he is African-American, said his defense attorney during his opening statements at Morrow's judicial misconduct hearing brought by the Michigan Judicial Tenure Commission.

[Saginaw County's Tri-City Hindu Temple to offer free medical services to public](#)

From MLive, 6/10/13

Kochville Township, MI — When Kochville Township's Tri-City Hindu Temple opens in several months it won't only be a place of worship, it also will be a place where anyone can go for free health care.

[Bradley L. Dizik: GOP should take lead to protect gay residents from discrimination](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/10/13

Since the GOP's defeat for the presidency in 2012, there have been calls from throughout the party for Republicans to have a more inclusive tone in order to remain relevant. But a more inclusive tone alone isn't enough.

[Census: Arabs thriving in U.S.; Mich. population tend to be younger, poorer](#)

From the Detroit News, 6/10/13

New data from the U.S. Census Bureau give a richer portrait of people of Arab descent in the United States, showing that they tend to be better educated and make more money than other Americans.

[Unauthorized immigrant brothers prepare for future after Skyline High School: 'We're not afraid'](#)

From MLive, 6/10/13

Jose and Javier Contreras, two brothers from Mexico, will be graduating from Skyline High School Monday night in Ann Arbor with a two-year full-ride scholarship to Washtenaw Community College.

[Gay marriage vote may come to Michigan in 2016](#)

From the Lansing State Journal, 6/8/13

Lansing — With more than half of voters supporting a repeal of Michigan's gay marriage ban, advocates say it's not a matter of if — but when — same-sex marriage is legal in the state.

[Workers say Whole Foods banned use of Spanish](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/7/13

Did Whole Foods tell two employees not to speak Spanish to each other on the job?

[The Chinese are coming; let's welcome them](#)

From the Detroit News, 6/7/13

The Chinese are coming! The Chinese are coming! Coming to the Motor City and to the state that put the world on wheels.

[Sticking Up For LGBT Victims Of Violence](#)

From PrideSource/BTL, 6/5/13

Detroit - Victimization of LGBT people comes in many forms. Whether it's through hate crimes, discrimination, pick-up crimes, harassment, intimate partner violence or sexual assault, Equality Michigan's Victim's Service Team is there to help.

[Stephen Henderson: Cheerios ad shows us how far we've come - and how far we have to go](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/5/13

It's a commercial hawking breakfast cereal.

That's all.

Richardville, Snyder Hesitant About Bills On Gay Rights

From Gongwer, 6/5/13

Senate Majority Leader Randy Richardville said on Tuesday that he and his colleagues will certainly talk about including gay and lesbian citizens in the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination of a person based on various identifications, but overturning same-sex marriage probably won't be happening any time soon.

"I don't see that happening," Mr. Richardville (R-Monroe) said of overturning the state's same-sex marriage ban, after saying that he would be open to discussing protections in the Elliot-Larsen Act.

"I don't think that discrimination against anybody is really the right thing and hatred is certainly worse than anything else we've talked about," he told reporters after session. "I've seen both of those things associated with this issue so I'm very careful about talking about it, but I think we do need to talk about it."

Asked if the fact that numerous polls have recently shown increased support to overturn the state's same-sex marriage ban and provide protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender citizens had any weight on making such a decision, Mr. Richardville said they did not.

"Polling doesn't drive what I do. It's nice to know, but we try to do what's right," he said. "Sometimes polls only give partial information so it's a good kind of barometer maybe, but it's not what drives (policy)."

Senate Democrats on Tuesday officially introduced legislation (SJR W*, SB 405* and SB 406*) on the matter after announcing last week that such would be their intent (See Gongwer Michigan Report, May 30, 2013). Sen. Rebekah Warren (D-Ann Arbor), who has spearheaded the effort, told Gongwer News Service last week that she hoped to re-introduce legislation that would expand the protections of the

Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act to include those in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community from discrimination in employment and housing, but was unsure when that would occur.

Governor Rick Snyder, speaking to reporters after speaking to a rally of older individuals as part of Older Michiganians Day on Tuesday, declined to say whether he would support any such legislation on amending the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act.

Instead, Mr. Snyder said he was focused at this time on issues such as jobs, kids and seniors. If the Legislature acts on legislation expanding coverage for sexual orientation in the state's civil rights act, then Mr. Snyder said he would look at it.

Asked why he would not endorse the concept at this time, since he has been open to inclusiveness, Mr. Snyder said he wanted to stay focused on "important things to get done." Those included critical issues such as health, specifically through the proposed expansion of Medicaid eligibility, and transportation.

[Put Michigan on the right side of history by putting gay marriage on the ballot](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/3/13

On June 16, 2008, Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon made history when they were the first same-sex couple to get married in San Francisco and among the first in California after the state Supreme Court granted marriage equality. Del and Phyllis were 87 and 83 years old, respectively, at the time of the wedding and had been together for 55 years.

[American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee leader Imad Hamad put on leave over sexual harassment allegations](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/2/13

Facing growing outrage, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) said it has placed Imad Hamad, the head of its Michigan office, on leave and announced it will launch an independent investigation of the civil rights advocate.

[No common sense is shown in high school discrimination cases](#)

From the Lansing State Journal, 6/2/13

So the Fulton School District is the latest to be charged with discrimination against its girls basketball teams.

[Feds toss Michigan complaint to ban Indian mascots for sports teams](#)

From the Detroit Free Press, 6/2/13

American Indian mascots, names and imagery will stay in Michigan schools for now.

[Delta College hosts Michigan Department of Civil Rights visit](#)

From MLive, 6/2/13

BAY CITY, MI — Local civil rights leaders, peace activists and others distressed by local injustices gathered Monday, June 3, in downtown Bay City to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, the state agency investigating and resolving discrimination complaints.